

Starting Line

March 2013



In this Issue:

- From the Commodore
- Care and Feeding of the Teenage Crew
- SYSCO Race Committee Schedule
- The Question
- SYSCO Board Meeting Minutes

Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon

From the Commodore

As we move ever closer to our racing season, there already have been some great SYSCO events that many of you have attended, and more are coming up soon.

To those of you who attended our Chateau SYSCO get together a few weekends ago, what a great treat to hear John Rekart, Jr. entrance us with great stories about the Lower Columbia River pilots as taken from his book *Rollin' on the River*. For those of you, who missed the presentation, check out John's book online. For any of us who spend much time on the Lower Columbia, which means pretty much all of us, it's a great read.

Our race captain, Warren Dalby has been very busy lately getting our schedule shaped up. He has lined up captains for all fleets except A and B, and is working on those too. Please let him know if you are interested.

The SYSCO race clinic is schedule for Thursday, 21 March at RCYC. The session begins at 6:30. Gary Whitney is set for the presentations. He will be showing an updated version of his PowerPoint presentation. Gary Bruner will be bringing the course board and flags. Rich Jones is set to add his wisdom to the evening.

SYSCO and PYC are hosting the opening day regatta this year on April 13 and 14. Phil Campagna graciously has volunteered as PRO. Stay tuned for a Notice of Race, because the event probably will be conducted in a manner somewhat different than that described in the OCSA race book.

Speaking of OCSA, the new protest system is just about ready for the 2013 racing season. Links to the site that Eric Rimkus has set up will be posted on Regatta Network and then he will handle the protests filed. That will all be done online after notifying the race committee in keeping with OCSA's General Sailing Instructions. There will also be links on SailPDX.org for filing protests.

OCSA is considering following in the path of SYSCO and CYC by placing the OCSA race book online. Our Board has given that effort the SYSCO blessing.

Thanks to CYC and everyone who volunteered to be race committee for our 2012-2013 Sailing on Sunday Series, which ended on 5 March. We especially our SYSCO historian, Bill Sanborn, for hosting the Chili Cook-off after the final race, a long and much cherished SYSCO custom. See you on the river!

- Frank Colistro, Commodore



Care and Feeding of the Teenage Crew

By Tod Bassham

All right-thinking people agree: sailors should never breed. The genetic pool would be much more sanitary if sailors declined to reproduce themselves—or even showered more frequently. Ever since Noah disembarked his crew on Mount Ararat, to repopulate the world with his sailors' progeny, there has been nothing but trouble.

Perhaps the most compelling reason to avoid maritime reproduction is the fact that it leads, inevitably, to the existence of teenage crewmembers. The cycle starts out innocently. The proud sailor mom and dad are determined not to give up the sport they love, and soon take their squalling little brute out on the water, swaddled and immobile in a combo drysuit/PFD/diaper. The new parents smile falsely at each other, pretending to enjoy the daysail, but the sound of the caterwauling infant is like nails on a chalkboard. Eventually, they give up on family sails “while the children are young.” The boat sits idle, used only rarely by one parent while the other, steaming with resentment, is trapped at home with mewling infants.

If the family survives this period without a bitter divorce, it enters the lil' hellion stage, where the children have boundless energy but no judgment, and are a constant danger to themselves and a peril to navigation. Sailing parents at this stage wear a distracted, haunted expression, and the strain of trying to reef the main while keeping an eye on the little tyke doing handstands on the bow pulpit has pushed many over the brink. At this point, the sailboat is usually sold or stored “until the children are older,” and the couple settles down to the grim task of trying to prevent their hyperactive Hellspawn from destroying civilization as we know it.

Years pass, and the children enter a calmer pre-pubescent period where they can walk, talk, chew gum and seemingly behave as rational, if dwarfish, human beings. However, do not be fooled: this is the most dangerous period for sailing parents, who are easily lulled into the false belief that it is safe to go sailing together again. The sailboat is repurchased or taken out of storage, and the family enjoys a few brief months of blissful sailing. But inevitably the day comes when the



son's voice cracks, the daughter sprouts bow fenders, and suddenly raging hormones transform both children into devils incarnate. In a word, they become...teenagers.

Experts agree that the only sensible thing to do with teenagers is to stuff them in a barrel and feed them through the bunghole until they reach voting age. But most parents are too soft-hearted for this obvious solution. My wife and I are no exceptions. After a few disastrous attempts to continue sailing with our newly transmogrified teenagers, we decided that the best course for all concerned was to completely separate sailing and children. The problem is what to do with the kids while my wife and I go off sailing. The grandparents will have nothing to do with them, the neighbors have restraining orders against them, and most of their friends are in juvenile detention. If we leave them unsupervised at home, they will just sit on the couch and rot their brains watching Fox News and reading the Wall Street Journal Op-Ed pages.

Finally, we stumbled on an expedient solution: simply stop on the way out to the boat, drop the kids off at a different church/synagogue/mosque/temple depending on the day of the week, and let the good folks there provide some free babysitting.

Using religious do-gooders as involuntary babysitters worked well for a while, until the day our daughter decided to start dating boys. It then struck us that our cunning little plan of benign parental neglect had a slight flaw. Due to the aforementioned raging hormones, teenagers (1) are fully capable of reproducing themselves, but (2) lack the basic judgment to make responsible decisions regarding *whether*, *when*, and *how* to reproduce. As a concerned father, I can tell you that the correct answers to these three questions are (a) *no*, (b) *never*, and (c) *ask your mother*. The situation cried out for immediate parental intervention.

Thus began Operation Date-A-Sailor. My wife and I figured that if we could get our daughter interested in dating sailors, we could reinstitute family sails and provide some supervision over the dating scene. If anything untoward happened, we could simply bludgeon her suitor to death with a winch handle and slip the body overboard. In addition, most sailors of



the male persuasion are—not to put too fine a point on it—drooling cretins, and we figured that there was a good chance our daughter would be repulsed by the male species, give up dating, and enter a nunnery.

Alas, this excellent plan backfired. After testing a number of candidates to the point of destruction (see *What Winter Sailing Taught Me*, Starting Line, April 2012), our daughter decided to date Bachelor No. 3. This young man can hand, reef and steer, bathes at least once a week whether he needs it or not, likes kittens and long walks on the beach, is a scholar and an athlete, and is polite and well-spoken to his elders. In short, he is generally insufferable to be around. But our daughter likes the cut of his jib, so I reluctantly added him to my racing crew, as foredeck. I figured that trying to control a spinnaker pole during a heavy weather gybe would prepare him to deal with my daughter's mood swings. Perhaps it has: they just celebrated their one-year anniversary. Bachelor No. 3's main flaw as a crewmember is that he is too young to buy beer—that most solemn obligation of racing crew—and he priggishly refuses to use false ID to buy beer for his skipper, as any patriotic American teenager would do. If the point is not obvious: sometimes *the skipper* has to buy the beer. The horror.

Still, sailing with teenagers is never easy. On our first voyage together with three teenagers (son, daughter and boyfriend), my wife and I learned to adjust expectations. For one thing, teens refuse to rise before noon, which makes it a tad

challenging to set the watch schedule. For another, they eat like famished locusts; woe betide the skipper that fails to empty the Costco shelves before leaving port. The prudent skipper of a teenage crew should also upgrade the boat's power supply, lest the starting battery be drained by insatiable teenage demand for electrons. And, as for sailing, we've generally found it more effective to communicate to the teenage crew by tweeting their mobile devices ("we're tacking now!"), rather than speaking actual words out loud in the old fuddy-duddy way.

Perhaps the most annoying aspect of teenage crews is their inability to focus very long on the mechanics of sailing. Our daughter will never down live the time she tried to steer the boat through a crowded fishing fleet while reading aloud the last chapter of *Harry Potter and the Chamberpot of Doom* to her



boyfriend, who was supposed to be on lookout. But there really is no point asking the boyfriend to keep a lookout or do anything nautical when our daughter is on deck; once her superstructure heaves into view an iceberg could cross the bow and he would never notice.

That is not to say a teenage crew has no advantages. Due to thermonuclear levels of hormonal activity, a teen's body temperature averages about 125 degrees Fahrenheit, meaning that you need not bother to provide crew with foulies or footwear for winter racing. Teens also believe themselves to be immortal, which translates into *huge* savings on safety equipment, such as PFDs and tethers. Consequently, with the proper insurance and a flexible attitude toward safety an all-teen crew can actually be a paying proposition. Finally, and most importantly, due to legal restrictions and limited capacity teen crewmembers have minimal impact on the most expensive item in a racing campaign: the beer budget.

In sum, with proper care and feeding, your teen should provide several years of satisfactory service as a crew member—if they remember to show up. Eventually, in the fullness of time, your teen will head off to college or jail or wherever ex-teens go, leaving you and your spouse alone in an empty nest. This is often a difficult emotional transition. Many sailing parents break down weeping at the strain of trying to hide from their departing teen the euphoria they feel at finally having the boat to themselves. From joy to diapers to despair and back again to joy, it has been a long journey. Have a beer. You deserve one.



SYSCO 2013 Race Committee Schedule

as of 3/5/2013

Fleet	Captains	SPRING	SUMMER
Cruising	Ken Stephens	4/23/2013	6/4/2013
A&B Fleets	tba	4/25/2013	6/6/2013
Cal 20	Fred Hazzard	4/30/2013	6/11/2013
Martin 24	George Brown	5/2/2013	6/13/2013
Ranger 20	Dennis Olmstead	5/14/2013	6/18/2013
E&F Fleets	Jim Shaw	5/16/2013	6/20/2013
Cruising	Ken Stephens	5/21/2013	6/25/2013
Merit 25	David Paligo	5/23/2013	6/27/2013
J-24	Pam Neild	5/28/2013	7/9/2013*
Martin 24	George Brown	5/30/2013	---
A&B Fleets	tba	---	7/11/2013*

Regatta	PRO	Date	Time
Opening Day	Phil Campagna	4/13/2013	1300
Opening Day	Phil Campagna	4/14/2013	1300
Summer Solstice	tba	6/21/2013	1830
Summer Solstice	tba	6/22/2013	1400
Columbia Crossing Cup	tba	8/10/2013	1400
St. Helens Race & Cruise	Warren Dalby	8/24/2013	1115

Note 1: Rich Jones will act as the PRO for the Spring and Summer evening series.

Note 2: Please contact Warren Dalby (503 313-4365 or sailrc@frontier.com) if changes need to be made to the RC schedule or if you need help finding a suitable committee boat to hold all the RC gear and keep the RC volunteers comfy.

* End of series BBQ nights.

The Question

By Bill Sanborn

I can across this article from “Lake Michigan Sail Racing Federation” posted in Scuttlebutt and written by Glenn T. McCarthy. How to answer: “How expensive is sailing?”

It might be a social occasion or a news reporter that brings about THE QUESTION. The worst thing anyone of us can do is perpetuate the myth that sailing is for millionaires. We all know it’s not and we only can identify a small number of sailors who actually are millionaires. So, what does each of us need to have in mind when this question is asked? You already know THE QUESTION is coming, you just don’t know when.

Answer it the way politicians answer all of their questions-with an answer you want to give that is not the answer to the question. What is the answer you want to give to help kill the myth?

Be ready to answer that, “Teachers, plumbers, firefighters and police, and people from all walks of life sail. It is not a millionaire’s game. Most everyone can afford to go sailboat racing, with a variety of affordable levels to play in. How many of us drive a car to the store and how many drive open-wheel Indy cars? There are a lot more sailors who drive a sailboat whose cost is equivalent to a car taken to the grocery store than drive sailboats equal to open wheel Indy cars!”

In that answer, didn’t you just say that sailing is for everyone? Didn’t you just help destroy the myth? This is one way to answer when this inevitable question come up. Keep this answer in mind.

I am not saying that sailing is not without some expense as we all know that BOAT means “Break Out Another Thousand”, but the point is that we are not playing at the level of the AC organizations, or the Vendee Globe campaigns, and we have chosen this sport that we enjoy, and play at a level that is within our budget. So with this answer we should be enlightening folks to what we do.



SYSCO Board Meeting Minutes

The March board meeting began promptly at 7pm at the Delta Park Elmer's. Attending members were; Jan Burkhart, Mike Nance, Bill Sanborn, Frank Colistro, Jackie Pitter, Ryan Rodgers, Phil Campagna, and Steven Stevenson.

Treasury

Adjusted income after expenses and carry over leaves a balance of 4994.00 dollars. Expense reduction is in full swing as we move forward through the race season.

Membership

Membership records 88 paid members and 3 memberships waiting for payment. More members are expected to renew in the upcoming months.

Six new members and three returning members were unanimously approved membership as well. Their names are as follows:

Jackie Pitter, SYSCO Social Chair

Mark Kloepfer, Associate member

Jim King, Hunter 34, Tanguera

Jeff Olin, Associate member

Jody Schultz, Catalina 22

Glen Rees, no boat info

Mike Pitarresi, S2, Yeah Baby

Jim Wahl, PF Bayliner, Dragonfly

Marv Dunn, Cal20, Milagro

Welcome to the club!

Racing

The starting time for the Opening Day Regatta are going to be moved forward one hour to 1pm rather than 2pm. This was done at the request of race committee with the hopes of fitting more racing in before the after race social at P.Y.C.

The SYSCO Race Clinic is scheduled for Thursday March 21st at Rose City Yacht Club, 3737 Marine Dr. at 6pm. Attendance is free and Pizza will be available for two dollars a slice.

Social

Jackie Pitter has stepped into the position of Social Chair and we'd like to extend our gratitude to her for doing so.

This year's end of year awards ceremony will be held at Kell's Irish Pub in downtown Portland. The ballroom upstairs has been reserved for the occasion.



Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon